

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, re-examination and reconsideration of the subject matter identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.112, and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

In response to the objection to claim 9 set forth in paragraph (1) of the Office Action, claim 9 has been amended to add a period at the end of the claim. Accordingly, the objection has been obviated and should be withdrawn.

New claim 10 has been presented. Claim 10 is identical to claim 9 except for the added feature of the tip portion generating a shear deformation on the electrode pads. Support for this feature may be found, for example, on page 10, lines 13-14 of the specification.

Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,500,607 to Verkuil for the reasons given in paragraph (3) of the Office Action. Reconsideration is requested of this rejection for at least the reasons which follow.

Verkuil '607 has an identical disclosure to U.S. Patent No. 5,767,691 (Verkuil '691), cited and distinguished during prosecution in the parent application, Serial No. 09/800,247. Verkuil '607 relates to a probe comprising a thin needle whose tip end has a first radius of curvature (R_1) and undergoes plastic deformation when pressed against a semiconductor substrate such that the central portion of the tip has a second radius of curvature (R_2) greater than the first. As shown in Figure 5, the probe 10 is tapered. The numeral value of 0.5 mil in column 3, lines 35-37, appears to be that of the radius of the wire used to prepare the probe 10. In other words, the probe 10 described in Verkuil '607 appears to be a needle wire contained within a tapered holder or sheath as shown in Figure 5 (perhaps similar to a

mechanical pencil). Thus, the radius of curvature of the probe 10 in the reference is unknown.

In contrast, the probe defined in claim 9 (and new claim 10) has a tip portion which is urged against a plurality of pods of an integrated semiconductor device. The tip portion defines a spherical surface having a specified radius of curvature not described in the reference.

For at least the above reasons, the §102(b) rejection based on Verkuil '607 should be reconsidered and withdrawn. Such action is earnestly requested.

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 838-6683 at his earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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